

DOLGELLEY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL



# ANNUAL HEALTH REPORT

For the Year 1951

Medical Officer of Health:

EVAN WILLIAMS, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor:

IDWAL ROBERTS, M.S.I.A., M.R.S.I.



1951

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE  
DOLGELLEY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Gentlemen,

I beg to submit the Report on the Health and Sanitary Conditions of the District for the year 1951.

Dr. R. W. Edwards relinquished the post of District Medical Officer of Health on 31st March, and I wish to thank him for the help given to me in completing this report and for the assistance received since my appointment.

I am also indebted to the Sanitary Inspector, Mr. I. Roberts, for his willing help and co-operation.

E. WILLIAMS, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

*District Medical Officer of Health*

## SECTION A

### GENERAL STATISTICS

Area of Rural District in Acres	...	...	...	...	...	150,128
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...	£28,550
Population (Registrar General's figures—Estimated mid-year)	...	...	...	...	...	9,225
(including members of the armed forces serving in the area)						
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	...	£107 2 6
Number of inhabited houses (according to the Rate Books) at end of year	...	...	...	...	...	2,625

### Comparability Factors :

Births	...	...	...	...	...	1.38
Deaths	...	...	...	...	...	0.94

### VITAL STATISTICS

#### Births :

Total Nett Births (Live and Still)	...	...	...	98
Births (Live)	...	...	...	97
Births (Still)	...	...	...	1
Live Birth Rate per 1,000 Population	...	...	...	10.51
(1950 figures — 13.88)				

#### Live Births :

	<i>Males</i>		<i>Females</i>	
Total	...	53	44	— 97
Legitimate	...	50	42	
Illegitimate	...	3	2	
Illegitimate Birth Rate (Percentage of Total Live Births)	...	...	...	5.1

#### Deaths :

Total Number	...	...	...	...	...	108
Males—60				Females—48		
Rate per 1,000 population...	...	...	...	...	...	11.71
(1950 figures — 12.52)						

#### Deaths of Infants under One Year :

Total	...	...	...	...	...	7
					<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
Total	...	...	...	...	4	3
Legitimate	...	...	...	...	4	3
Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	—	—
Infant Mortality (Rate per 1,000 Live Births)	...	...	...	...	...	72.16
(1950 figures — 32.78)						
Deaths of Legitimate Infants Mortality (per 1,000 Live Births)...	...	...	...	...	...	72.16
Deaths of Illegitimate Infants Mortality (per 1,000 Live Births)	...	...	...	...	...	Nil

## Deaths of Infants under Four Weeks :

Total — 4					<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
Total	...	...	...	...	2	2
Legitimate	...	...	...	...	2	2
Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	—	—

## Maternal Mortalty :

Deaths connected with childbirth and pregnancy ... Nil

## Deaths from Cancer :

Total — 22					
Rate per 1,000 population	...	...	...	...	2.38

## Deaths from Tuberculosis :

Total — 4					
Rate per 1,000 population	...	...	...	...	0.43

## SECTION B.

### GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA

#### (1) Public Health Officers of the Authority :

One Medical Officer of Health.

One Sanitary Inspector—holding appointment of Sanitary Inspector—Surveyor.

#### (2) Laboratory Facilities :

Water analysis (Chemical) carried out by the Public Analyst, Chester.

Water (bacteriological) carried out by the Public Health Laboratory, Aberystwyth.

Milk (tests for cleanliness, for keeping quality and for tuberculosis) carried out at Public Health Laboratory, Aberystwyth. No charge is made on the local authority for these tests.

#### (3) Ambulance Facilities :

Ambulances are stationed at Dolgelley. Transport for sick cases can easily and readily be obtained.

#### (4) Infant Welfare Clinic :

Held at : Dyffryn—once a month.

Dolgelley—Wesleyan Chapel vestry every 2 weeks.

Abergynolwyn—at the Institute monthly and Corris,

(5) **Ante Natal Clinics :**

At Dolgelley Hospital—two a month.

(6) **Orthopaedic Clinic :**

At Dolgelley Hospital—two a month.

(7) **Tuberculosis Clinic :**

Held at the Dolgelley Hospital—two a month.

(8) **Diphtheria Immunisation :**

Arranged by the County Medical Officer of Health. Immunisation of babies and young children carried out at Primary Schools.

(9) **Hospitals :**

One fully equipped hospital at Dolgelley.

(10) **Infectious Diseases :**

Total number of infectious diseases (other than Tuberculosis) notified during the year ... ..		68
Scarlet Fever ... ..	6	
Bacillary Dysentery ... ..	Nil	
Whooping Cough ... ..	13	
Measles ... ..	49	
Infantile Paralysis ... ..	Nil	
Diphtheria ... ..	Nil	

## TUBERCULOSIS

### New Cases :

Pulmonary : Total — 8

Males—5

Females—3

Non-Pulmonary : Total — 1

Males—Nil

Females—1

### Tuberculosis Deaths :

Pulmonary : Total — 4

Males—4

Females—Nil

Non-Pulmonary : Total — Nil

## NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1951 IN AGE GROUPS

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 ... ..								
1 ... ..								
2 ... ..								
5 ... ..								
10 ... ..								
15 ... ..		1						
20 ... ..		1						
25 ... ..	1	1						
35 ... ..					1			
45 ... ..	1, 1+							
55 ... ..	1							
65 ... ..				1				
75 ... ..	1				3			
Total ... ..	5	3	—	1	4			

+ notified after death 1 P.T.

# CAUSES OF DEATH 1951

	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>
Tuberculosis Pulmonary ... ..	4	0
Acute Poliomyelitis ... ..	—	—
Cancer Stomach ... ..	5	3
„ Lung ... ..	—	—
„ Breast ... ..	—	3
„ Other sites ... ..	4	7
Vascular lesions of nervous system ... ..	6	6
Coronary disease, angina ... ..	6	1
Hypertension with heart disease ... ..	1	2
Other heart diseases ... ..	7	11
Other circulatory disease ... ..	3	1
Influenza ... ..	2	3
Pneumonia ... ..	2	2
Bronchitis ... ..	2	—
Other diseases of respiratory system ... ..	—	—
Ulcer of Stomach and duodenum ... ..	1	0
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea... ..	—	—
Nephritis and nephrosis ... ..	3	2
Other defined and ill-defined diseases ... ..	9	7
Motor vehicle accidents ... ..	0	0
All other accidents ... ..	1	0
Suicide ... ..	2	0
Diabetes ... ..	1	0
Congenital malformations ... ..	1	0



## MASS RADIOGRAPHY SERVICE

The Mass Radiography Service Unit visited the district during May and June. Within the area centres were established at Corris, Dinas Mawddwy and Llwyngwrl. Outside the rural area centres were established at Barmouth and Dolgelley.

Numbers of persons X-rayed were :

Corris General Population ... ..	59
Dinas Mawddwy General Population	139
Llwyngwrl General Population ... ..	56
Dolgelley General Population ... ..	188
Barmouth General Population ... ..	236

There were several complaints received from the public—the chief being the lack of publicity given to the Service. This may have been so, and must be improved. On the part of the general public the service was not patronised as it should have been—there was evidence of indifference and apathy on their part, as can be seen from the low figures of persons who did avail themselves of the service.

Whilst there has been a fall in the annual death rate from tuberculosis, there has been no appreciable decline in the number of new cases notified each year.

Provided the disease is discovered sufficiently early, there is a cure. The fact has not been emphasised adequately—the public are still prone to view the diagnosis of tuberculosis almost as a death sentence. This may explain their apparent attitude of apathy and indifference to the visits of the Mass Radiography Unit. The public are really interested, but they cannot dispel the fear of being labelled as “suffering from tuberculosis.”

A fresh, more positive, outlook must be adopted by the public towards this disease ; it must be viewed not as a disease which results in death, but as a disease which can be cured.

It is difficult to eliminate, but with their active co-operation much can be achieved. The earlier it is discovered the greater the chances of complete recovery, and the risk of its spread amongst the rest of the family and the community can be lessened.

The public must play their part, and avail themselves of the services of the Mass Radiography Unit. It is to their advantage.

# PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS CASES

Tuberculosis Register 31st December, 1951

				<i>No. of Houses Per Built 1,000 of</i>		
<i>Population</i>				<i>Popula-</i>	<i>tion</i>	<i>tion</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>tion</i>	<i>1951</i>	
Bala ... ..	5	6	11	1,488	7.3	44.4
Barmouth ... ..	4	5	9	2,366	3.8	35.9
Dolgelley ... ..	16	14	30	2,535	11.8	20.9
Ffestiniog ... ..	75	34	109	6,871	15.8	2.0
Towyn ... ..	9	6	15	4,410	3.4	11.8
Deudraeth ... ..	26	39	65	6,975	9.3	13.8
Dolgelley Rural ...	29	12	41	9,225	4.4	8.4
Edeyrnion ... ..	13	11	24	4,182	5.7	17.7
Penllyn ... ..	5	7	12	2,799	4.3	5.7
Pennal ... ..	1	8	9	319	2.8	

## DISINFECTION OF INFECTED ARTICLES AND BEDDING

At the present moment there is no proper apparatus for the disinfection of infected bedding and clothing.

The main disease where disinfection is required is tuberculosis. The number of cases notified each year still remains at a high level.

As it would be an expensive item for each local authority to provide their own disinfector, the District Councils have now agreed to combine for the provision of a disinfector which would be placed centrally within the county. The County Council have been approached regarding assistance, by way of transport and personnel for the collection and delivery of bedding, for which payment would be made.

The request for a disinfector is nothing new—its need was pointed out in 1888. In 1910 the Medical Officer of Health described the disinfection of bedding in the County as being more or less a farce. I believe we are at last on the verge of providing a proper disinfection service.

## NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT SECTION 47

(Removal to suitable premises of persons in need of care  
and attention)

No action was found necessary during 1951. A register of elderly persons living alone is now being prepared. There was some difficulty in the ascertainment of the numbers of such persons. They are reported, however, by the District Nurses, Sanitary Inspectors and Officers of the National Assistance Board.

This register, although continually changing and although it cannot possibly be kept completely up to date, does provide an index of the elderly persons living alone, and it does assist in ensuring that regular visits can be paid to those persons.

They cling to their homes, and I feel there would be much local criticism should they be removed under this Act against their will, however great was the need.

From an economic and humane viewpoint, it would be better to allow these persons to continue living in their own homes, and I find that many can manage reasonably well for themselves if provided with a little outside daily help. This can be given if they reside in a town or village.

Persons living in isolated or remote cottages provide a different problem and where no local help is near, then compulsory removal to homes is the only alternative however disagreeable it may be to all concerned.

## HOUSING

The accompanying table shows the number of new Council houses created within the district since 1945 :

Abergynolwyn	...	...	...	...	12	1947
Dyffryn	...	...	...	...	12	1947
Brithdir	...	...	...	...	4	1947
Llanegryn	...	...	...	...	8	1948
Llwyngwrl	.....	...	...	...	30	1949
Talybont	...	...	...	...	4	1950
Bontddu	...	...	...	...	8	1951
Taicynhaef	...	...	...	...	3	1951
Dyffryn	...	...	...	...	7	1951

## COUNCIL OWNED HOUSES UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Dyllfryn	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Rhoslefain	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
Llanfachreth	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7

It is interesting to note that villages which are closely connected with the slate quarrying industry and who have a high incidence of lung tuberculosis, no new Council houses have yet been erected. To prevent the spread of tuberculosis and to assist in the cure of such affected persons, good dry, well ventilated homes are essential. Yet in the villages of Corris and Aberllefenni — two such affected areas — no Council houses have yet been erected.

Progress regarding housing has been considerably retarded here by reason of delay in the completion of a satisfactory water supply.

It is gratifying to report that the Council, in order to assist them in considering the applications for the selection of tenants for new Council Houses, have directed the Medical Officer of Health and the Sanitary Inspector to submit a report on the condition of the houses occupied by the applicants. This did ensure that the most needy cases — those living in damp, overcrowded, unfit homes, and who were suffering from chest disease, were given special consideration by the Council.

To prevent re-occupation of unfit houses vacated by successful Council house applicants, the Council obtained an undertaking from the owner, that such unfit houses should not be re-occupied where possible, unless satisfactory repairs and improvements were made to the properties.

## HOUSES BUILT BY COUNCILS FROM 1945 TO DECEMBER, 1951

*(Showing rate per thousand of population)*

<i>District</i>	<i>Population (Mid 1951 estimated)</i>	<i>Houses Built</i>	<i>Rate per 1,00 of Population</i>
<i>Rural</i>			
Bala ... ..	1483	66	44.4
Barmouth ... ..	2366	85	35.9
Dolgelley... ..	2535	53	20.9
Ffestiniog ... ..	6871	14	2.0
Towyn ... ..	4410	52	11.8
<i>Urban</i>			
Deudraeth ... ..	6975	96	13.8
Dolgelley... ..	9225	78	8.4
Edeyrnion ... ..	4182	74	17.7
Penllyn ... ..	2799	16	5.7

## SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA

Number of formal notices issued	...	...	...	...	...	14
Number of formal notices complied with	...	...	...	...	...	12
Number of informal notices issued	...	...	...	...	...	2
Number of informal notices complied with	...	...	...	...	...	2
Total of new houses completed by Private Enterprise	...	...	...	...	...	—
Visits to Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	...	14
Number of notices re. defects	...	...	...	...	...	2
Notice re. removal of ashes	...	...	...	...	...	—
Notice re. defective drains	...	...	...	...	...	—
Number of visits re. infectious diseases	...	...	...	...	...	—
Number of houses disinfected	...	...	...	...	...	4
Number of pail closets converted into W.C's	...	...	...	...	...	82

## HOUSING ACTS, 1936

Inspection of dwelling houses during the year :

- (a) Total number of houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health ar Housing Acts ... .. 184
- (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ... .. 238  
 Number of houses found in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human occupation ... .. 7
- Number of houses (exclusive of those referred to under preceeding sub-head) found not in all respects fit for habitation ... .. 87
- (c) Remedy of defects during the year without the service of formal notice ... .. 82

## WATER SUPPLIES

It is hoped that the routine bacteriological sampling of water supplies to all villages will be systematically maintained in future, and occasional chemical samples will also be taken.

From the Table it can be seen that of the twenty villages in the Rural Area, nine have a satisfactory water supply ; a number of these were completed since 1945. Five other villages have new water undertakings now in progress, and it is hoped they will be completed during 1952.

For the six remaining villages, five schemes and proposals are in hand.



Supply	Treatment	Bacteriological Examination		Remarks
		Samples Taken	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Aberangell	Insufficient	3	3	—
Abergynolwyn	Sufficient	3	3	—
Arthog Village	Insufficient	—	—	—
Bontddu	Sufficient	3	3	—
Barmouth Jnct.	Sufficient	4	4	—
Brithdir		—	—	—
Corris	Sufficient	3	3	1
Dinas Mawddwy	Sufficient	5	5	—
Dyffryn		1	1	—
Fairbourne	Private supply — unsatisfactory.	Proposed extension from Barmouth Junction Water Supply.		
Ganllwyd	Sufficient	2	2	—
Llanegryn	Insufficient	5	5	—
Llanelltyd		—	—	—
Llanfachreth		—	—	—
Llanymawddwy		2	2	—
Llwyngwril	Sufficient	4	4	—
Penmaenpool		—	—	—
Talybont	Insufficient	1	1	—
Taicynhaef	Sufficient	3	3	—
Rhydymain		—	—	—

Plans awaiting approval of Ministry. To be connected to Dinas Mawddwy Scheme.

Satisfactory water Supply.

Scheme submitted to Ministry 1951

Satisfactory water supply.

Satisfactory water supply.

New scheme almost completed.

New scheme almost completed.

New post war scheme. Satisfactory.

Satisfactory water supply.

Satisfactory water supply.

Proposals in hand for supplementary supply.

New post war scheme almost completed.

New post war scheme almost completed.

New post war scheme completed.

Satisfactory water supply.

Scheme with Ministry.

New supplementary scheme almost completed.

Satisfactory water supply.

New scheme with Ministry.

## PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES TO INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

A considerable number of improvements and extensions to existing properties including private water supplies and extensions have been made to small holdings and farms under the provisions of the Hill Farming Act, 1946, in co-operation with the County Agricultural Committee.

Eighty such schemes have already been completed since 1945.

Whilst there is room for improvement in the number of samples taken for village supplies, much time has been spent in sampling water for proposed water supplies. Eighty-nine of these were taken during the year.

## SEWERAGE ARRANGEMENTS

Aberangell : Satisfactory sewerage cannot be constructed until a proper water scheme is available.

Abergynolwyn : New sewage disposal works almost completed and arrangements are in hand for connection of houses thereto.

Arthog Village : Satisfactory sewerage scheme cannot be constructed until a proper water scheme is available.

Bontddu : New sewerage scheme completed 1951. Connections to houses in hand.

Barmouth Jct. : Isolated area — dependent on cesspools.

Brithdir : Satisfactory sewerage cannot be constructed until a proper water scheme is available.

Corris : Sewerage scheme submitted to Ministry.

Dinas Mawddwy : Sewerage scheme submitted to Ministry.

Dyffryn : New sewerage scheme completed 1951 — connections to houses in hand.

Fairbourne : There is already an existing sewerage in the village.

Ganllwyd : Plans of new sewerage scheme in hand.

Llanegryn : Plans for sewerage scheme in hand.

Llanelltyd : Sewerage scheme approved by Ministry. Completion expected during 1952.

Llanfachreth : Sewerage scheme approved by Ministry. Completion expected during 1952.

Llanymawddwy : Isolated area — dependent on cesspools.

Llwyngwril : Sewerage scheme already in operation.

Penmaenpool : Scattered village, small scheme dependent on satisfactory water supply.

Talybont : Scattered village — cesspools only. Recommended that a sewerage scheme be provided for the area.

Taicynhaef : Scattered village — cesspools only.

Rhydymain : Sewerage scheme will be provided when water is available.

From the Table headed "Sewerage Arrangements" it can be seen that, out of the twenty villages and hamlets in the Rural Area, only two villages had a reasonably satisfactory functioning sewerage scheme up to 1945.

Looking back through past Annual Reports attention has been repeatedly drawn by Medical Officers to the presence of insanitary arrangements which have existed in practically all the villages in the area, and yet little real progress had been made.

Since the war years, there has been a more definite and thorough approach to this problem, not only regarding sewerage works, but also water supplies. It is gratifying to find that at last a satisfactory water supply, by which is meant an abundance of pure, wholesome, water piped into each house (not to stand-pipes in the streets) is on the way to being an accomplished fact.

Once the water arrangements have been completed, proper sewerage schemes can then be introduced. Since the war, some villages have been properly sewered; in others sewerage schemes are in course of construction, and plans are being submitted for the remainder.

It might appear from the Table that in the majority of instances most of the village sewerage arrangements are still mainly in the planning stage. But these are definite plans—the intention to improve the Public Health conditions of the area are real. These are healthy signs. It is well to have an objective. We then know at what we are aiming.

Whilst some villages in the rural area have already a sewerage scheme in existence, there are a number of small isolated hamlets which at the moment have not been dealt with. For the bigger villages, new sewerage schemes have in some instances been already completed, others are in course of construction and for the others, plans are in preparation.

From the table it may be seen that a sewerage scheme for Dyffryn and Bontddu have been completed.

A scheme for Abergynolwyn has almost been completed.

Schemes for Llanfachreth and Llanelltyd are in hand and, it is hoped, will be completed during 1952.

### **Rivers and Streams :**

There are no industries in the district to pollute the rivers and streams but there are some careless individuals who insist on throwing tins and refuse into the streams. Warning notices are posted in some localities to prevent this undesirable custom, but it is difficult to abolish it altogether.



**Refuse Collection :**

The Council have provided a satisfactory covered lorry ; the necessary staff and a number of refuse disposal sites, and undertakes by direct labour the scavenging of the built-up villages and houses en route throughout the area. Twice weekly collections are made in the Corris, Abergynolwyn and Dyffryn areas.

**Smoke Abatement :**

No action was necessary in this respect during the year.

**Swimming Baths and Pools :**

There are no public nor privately owned swimming baths open to the public.

**Eradication of Bugs :**

No action was necessary during the year.

**Meat and other Food Inspection :**

No animals were slaughtered for human consumption in the area. The slaughtering is carried out at the abattoir situated in the Dol-gelley Urban District.

Other foodstuffs surrendered as being unfit for human consumption include the following : 17lbs Evaporated Milk ; 3lb 8oz. Con-densed Milk ; 18lb 12oz. Greengages ; 8lb. 7oz. cherries ; 4oz. Sar-dines ; 13½oz. Peas ; 28lbs Herrings.

**Ice Cream Premises :**

Number of manufacturing retailers registered ... ..	Nil
Number of retailers registered ... ..	17

**Clean Food Campaign (Food & Drugs Acts, 1938) :**

The model byelaws made under Section 15 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938 and adopted by the Council, are in operation and are having effective results.

**Bakehouses :**

These are small and subject to periodical inspection. They are kept clean and are limewashed or painted at intervals. There are no underground bake-houses.

## **Workshops :**

These are few in number and very small. They are for the most part occupied by the owner. Their sanitary conditions are on the whole satisfactory.

## **Conclusion :**

The year 1951 brought changes and new schemes, which I hope will bring amenity to the District and general satisfaction.

I desire to express to the Council my appreciation for the confidence reposed in me.

I am, Sirs,

Your Obedient Servant,

EVAN WILLIAMS,

M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

*District Medical Officer of Health*

IDWAL ROBERTS,

A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

*Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor*



